(vii) Government is conscious of the need for the revival of the industrial sector and has constituted Four Task Forces for Steel, Capital Goods. Commercial Vehicles and Cement to recommend policy interventions to address the problems faced by these sectors. The Task Forces have submitted their recommend tions to the Government. The Government has already notified exemption of seven inputs used in steel manufacturing from the 5% special customs duty. The policy announcements relating to other sectors are expected shortly.

(viii) Government has constituted an Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister and the Council on Trade and Industry to the Prime Minister which would discuss policy measures on important economic issues.

It is expected that the slowdown in current year's growth would be arrested and the growth would pick up as a result of the various measures announced.

Global entrepreneurs' conference

45. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a two-day global entrepreneurs conference has been organised at New Delhi on 12th November, 1998;

(b) if so, the names of States and Union Territories and Foreign Countries which participated in the Conference with objectives;

(c) whether the entrepreneurs of Himachal Pradesh also participated in the said meet; and

(d) if so, their names, criteria for their selection with guidance offered by Himachal Pradesh Government with respect to investment in Himachal Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following States/Union Territories participated in the conference: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Meghalaya and Pondicherry. No foreign country participated in the Conference. The main objective of the Conference was to put across the attractive investment environment in India for Foreign Direct Investment, including Investment by Non-Resident Indians, Persons of Indian Origin and Overseas Corporate Bodies (Predominantly owned by the NRIs).

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, Himachal Pradesh Government Representatives participated in the Conference and offered guidance to participants with respect to investment in Himachal Pradesh.

All State Govts./Union Territories administration/NRIs, foreign and Indian entrepreneurs were welcome to participate in the Conference, hence, there was no criteria or procedure for selection.

Reform Process for PSUs

46. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Goverment propose to undertake some bolder reforms process for Public Sector Units;

(b) if so, the objectives for the same -with names of PSUs in Andhra Pradesh to be covered under these moves;

(c) whether these reforms will ensure more job security to workers of PSUs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons for ignoring this aspect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) to (e) Reforms in Public Sector Units are taken up with the requirements of the specific enterprise in view. Reforms of State Public Sector. Enterprises are undertaken by the respective State Governments. Restructuring efforts in Public Enterprises are aimed at improving the profitability and viability of enterprises and workers' welfare and interests are of utmost concern of the Government.

Disinvestment of PSUs

47. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the action plan drawn out for outright sale/disinvestment of PSUs for the current year;

(b) the details of the PSUs short-listed for outright strategic sale, disinvestment, joint ventures;

(c) the details of progress made, so far, in this regard; and

(d) the details of the policy changes for effective rehabilitation of sick Central PSUs on sustainable basis and funds provided/ proposed therefor during the current year and Ninth Plan period, particularly for units in Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) to (c) As announced in the Budget Speech for 1998-99, the Government have decided to disinvest specified portions of equity from Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL), Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (VSNL) and Container Corpn, of India Ltd. (CONCOR), In respect of CONCOR, disinvestment of Government equity of 9 million shares has already been completed. In respect of other enterprises, action have already been initiated for effecting disinvestments.

(d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Investment by foreign companies

48. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken to allow steel, power, refinery and cellular business by foreign companies in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether an agreement has been sign?d by some foreign firms with private sectors of India in Mumbai and Chennai for collaboration in the above fields; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (d) Sir, as per the existing policy, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is permissible in most sectors, including Steel, Power, Refinery and Cellular Business. In the case of Steel, FDI upto 51% is covered under the automatic route operated by the RBI. Proposals involving foreign investment over 51% in this sector are considered by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) on a case to case basis. Foreign investment upto 100% is permissible under the automatic route in so far as the power sector is concerned provided the foreign equity does not exceed Rs. 1500 crore. The Refinery Sector is also open to Foreign Direct Investment upto 49% but all the proposals in this sector require the approval of FIPB/Government. Similarly, in the case of Cellular Telephone Services, Foreign Direct Investment is permissible upto 49% and require FIPB/Government approval.

Several approvals for FDI in the above sectors have been granted, including approvals for setting up such projects in Mumbai and Chennai, details of which are published on a monthly basis in SIA Newsletter which is widely circulated, including the Parliament Library.

New Model Cars by Maruti-Suzuki

49. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether new models of Maruti cars are being brought out to compete with Santro, Matiz and Indica etc. in small car sector of the automobile industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) how does Maruti-Suzuki plan to take up the challenge of these new models?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (d) Maruti Udyog Ltd. (MUL) is not a Government Company. The Board of Directors of MUL is, therefore, competent to take appropriate commercial decisions to meet the challenge from competitors, including inter alia introduction of new models of Maruti Cars at the appropriate time.

भारतीय सीमेंट निगम में कुप्रबंधन

50. **श्री शिबू सोरेन** : क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या भारतीय सीमेट निगम के 7000 कर्मचारियों का भविष्य, वहां व्यापत कुप्रबंधन के कारण खतरे में हैं;